

Nomination of Rockwell A. Schnabel To Be Deputy Secretary of Commerce

February 5, 1991

The President today announced his intention to nominate Rockwell Anthony Schnabel to be Deputy Secretary of Commerce at the Department of Commerce. He would succeed Thomas Joseph Murrin.

Since 1989 Mr. Schnabel has served as Under Secretary for Travel and Tourism at the U.S. Department of Commerce in Washington, DC. Prior to this Mr. Schnabel served as U.S. Ambassador to Finland, 1985–1989. In addition, he was president of Unilife Assurance Group in Luxembourg,

1975–1979. In 1965, Mr. Schnabel joined Bateman Eichler, Hill Richards, Inc., serving in various senior management positions including president of the firm's holding company.

Mr. Schnabel attended Trinity College in The Netherlands, 1952–1956. He served in the U.S. National Guard Reserves, 1959–1965. He was born December 30, 1936, in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Mr. Schnabel is married, has three children, and resides in Washington, DC.

Remarks on Signing the Veterans' Compensation Amendments of 1991 and the Agent Orange Act of 1991

February 6, 1991

Good morning. It's a pleasure once again to have so many familiar faces here today representing our veterans. And of course, it's a pleasure to be standing up here with one of the great members of our Cabinet, Ed Derwinski. I see so many Members of Congress—five special ones here who were instrumental in the passage of this legislation: Congressmen Sonny Montgomery, Bob Stump; Senator Specter, Senator Murkowski, and Senator Bob Graham.

From Midway to Normandy, from Inchon to Khe Sanh to last week's battle at Khafji, American marines, soldiers, airmen, sailors, coastguardsmen have given their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor to keep freedom safe. American men and women are fighting for peace today, as we did then, because America must lead in deterring and defeating aggression. And we're here today to ensure that our nation will ever remember those who defended her: the men and women who stood where duty required them to stand.

It's my honor today to sign into law two bills which give veterans and their families the compensation that they deserve. The first is H.R. 3, and it provides for a 1991

cost-of-living adjustment. And the second, H.R. 556, codifies our administration's regulations for compensation for three diseases. It also relies on independent science, with the help of the National Academy of Sciences, to settle the troubling question concerning the effects on veterans of exposure to herbicides used during the Vietnam war. This is a continuation of our policy over the past 2 years to deal with this very complex and very divisive issue, but to deal with it in a fair and compassionate way.

And I want to salute those who ensured that, in the end, a bipartisan spirit prevailed to pass these important pieces of legislation. These two bills meet the critical needs of our veterans and will build the confidence of tomorrow's veterans that they and their loved ones will not be forgotten.

A grateful nation salutes our veterans for the difference they have made in the history of this country and, indeed, of the world. Our allied forces are sacrificing much today in the pursuit of peace for tomorrow. And the American people, I believe, are behind them foursquare. And I think everyone in this room is as proud of them—I know ev-

everyone in this room is as proud of them as I am. Each and every one has volunteered to serve, and they're standing against a dictator whose brutality reminds us every single day that he must be stopped. The brave men and women of Desert Storm know when the forces of aggression arise, America stands ready to do the hard work of freedom.

And so, I am very proud and pleased to be able to sign this legislation today. I'd like to ask these five Members of Congress who are with us to join Secretary Derwinski and me as we sign these bills into law. But I want to thank everybody here who was instrumental in the passage of these important pieces of legislation because I know that many out in the audience deserve great credit for this.

Thank you so much, and now let's sign this legislation.

[At this point, the President signed the bills.]

Got it done; that's great. It's good to see all of you. Thanks for coming by, and now we'll go about our work here.

Things are doing darned well over there, too, I might add. I know there's a lot of interest in all of this, and I am very confident that we're on schedule, and there have been no surprises on our side; I think a few on his.

But the Air Force has been doing a good job; the Navy; obviously, the Marines have been engaged; and of course the Army, ready under a couple of superb commanders. So, to you who have shown the support and interest, I just want you to know I feel very confident that this matter is going to resolve itself, and it's not going

to take that long, and it is going to be total and complete.

And one of the things that I take great pride in and I think everybody here understands is that we've not second-guessing. I know what my obligations are as Commander in Chief, and I also have enough confidence in those people out there in the desert, from General Schwarzkopf on down, and those people across the river in the Pentagon—Cheney and Powell, particularly—that they will make the tactical calls. And I'm perfectly prepared, as I said yesterday, to make whatever tough calls might lie ahead. But we've not going to be second-guessing. And once again, we're not going to have these courageous young men and women over there fighting with some kind of a limited agenda, fighting with their hands tied behind their back. We went through that, and we're never going to do it again as far as I'm concerned.

Thank you all very much.

Note: The President spoke at 11:15 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Secretary of Veterans Affairs Edward J. Derwinski; Representatives G.V. (Sonny) Montgomery and Bob Stump; Senators Arlen Specter, Frank H. Murkowski, and Bob Graham; Gen. H. Norman Schwarzkopf, commander of the U.S. forces in the Persian Gulf; Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney; and Gen. Colin L. Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. H.R. 3, approved February 6, was assigned Public Law No. 102-3. H.R. 556, approved February 6, was assigned Public Law No. 102-4.

Statement on Signing the Veterans' Compensation Amendments of 1991

February 6, 1991

I am pleased today to sign into law H.R. 3, the "Veterans' Compensation Amendments of 1991."

Our Nation provides compensation and other monetary benefits to service-disabled

veterans and Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) benefits to the survivors of those who died as a result of military service to our country. My Administration is committed to ensuring that these payments